

Parks Advisory Committee
March 10, 2003

Members Present: Steve Davis, Merle Bottge, John Rosselli, Johnny Medlin, Janet Alexander, and Emily Schue

Members Absent: Damien Gilbert

Staff Present: Rich Fay, Jake Risley, Todd Winter and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Dick Lamster, President of the Board for the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum; Bob Kendall, Vice-President; and Janine DeBois (unsure of spelling), Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah

Merle Bottge, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications

Bottge wanted to add a discussion regarding a park tour, under the Parks Managers Report, and add agenda item no. 6 regarding a discussion of the Frank Parrish Bridge. Rosselli wanted to discuss changing the meeting start time for the summer.

Fay announced that we will be presenting the Volunteer of the Year award to Charles and Elaine Hurst, our Park Hosts at Harbor Vista Campground at the next Parks Advisory Committee meeting in April.

II. Approval of Minutes – February 10, 2003 Parks Advisory Committee Meeting

Bottge asked that the minutes from the February 10, 2003 meeting be approved. Davis so moved, Rosselli seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Public Comment (Maximum of 20 Minutes)

Dick Lamster, President of the Board for the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, was here regarding fees being charged at the Howard Buford Recreation Area. The Arboretum has received a lot of calls on the subject. The Arboretum Board has not taken a stand on the subject but they are concerned that with the Arboretum members already paying a membership fee that it seems unfair to ask them to also pay an admission fee. Mr. Lamster felt that something could be worked out, possibly sharing the revenue from the admission fees for example.

Bob Kendall, Vice-President of the Board for the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, asked if the Parks Division had a preference for one of the options listed in the Board packet. Bottge stated that this Committee supported the option that included establishing an admission fee at Mt. Pisgah. She also stated that she testified at the Board meeting to that fact. Mr. Kendall asked if the Parks Division staff has stated a preference. Fay said that he felt that we needed the fees at Mt. Pisgah to offset the costs of operating that park. Mr. Kendall said that he felt that the Board has already approved the fee increases and adding admission fees at Mt. Pisgah – what is the Parks Division’s preference – Option A or Option B or a combination of options. Fay said that his preference is to hold down the increases in fees for camping and picnic sites to 33% and collect the fees at Mt. Pisgah, otherwise we have to raise the other fees too high.

Sabine Dubois, member of the Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah, asked if the same consideration would be given to the members of FBP and other volunteers. She said she would stop volunteering if she had to pay to get into the park.

IV. Revised FY 03/04 Budget Approval

Fay referred to the paperwork he mailed out to each Committee member, which is pretty much the same as the report from last month. One of the differences is that he has taken the money from the two Park Maintenance 2 positions and redistributed that money to eight (8) seasonal and five (5) extra-hire positions. The remaining money was also redistributed -- \$65,000 to buying needed machinery and equipment and \$50,000 to cover three necessary projects. The first project, dredging the sewage lagoons at Richardson Park, the second, renovation of the dump station system at Harbor Vista Campground and, the third, installing a drain field and water pump at Mt. Pisgah.

Fay distributed a sheet showing budget projections based on last years expenses – its projected that we will be about \$4,875 in the red at the end of the fiscal year. Fay stated that, regarding the 830 budget, the County is still pursuing the Tofftemark property, but so far the appraised value is way below the asking price. Fay said we would be borrowing money from Fleet again to cover the matching funds for the Richardson Picnic Shelter. However, Jake Risley continues to seek donations from area businesses.

•Oregon State Marine Board/ODFW Grant Opportunities – Jake Risley: Fay felt it was a good time to discuss this item. Risley stated that the OSMB recently had their biannual facility grants workshop. They will be starting round one grant submittals in July 2003. Along with the OSMB grant program, they invited ODFW to talk about their grant program. ODFW will fund up to 75% of boating related improvement projects, and next year may relax the requirements to include marina replacement/repairs. Ollie Snowden asked Risley to talk about the Armitage Park Parking Improvement grant.

Risley said that when the opportunity came up to resubmit this project to the OSMB, County Counsel and County Admin. were concerned about the contract language, which requires written approval from the OSMB for any proposed fee increases. Risley stated that this language has been in their contracts since the mid-80's and we've had about 44 grants with them and they have never denied anybody permission to raise fees. But this issue has come up since we are in the process of trying to raise our fees. Ollie said that now no one wants to sign the contract because they feel the OSMB is exceeding their authority. Legal Counsel has given some possible wording options to them but so far it hasn't gone anywhere. Risley will be going back to the Board on March 19, 2003, to ask the Commissioners to authorize signing of this contract. We will probably want to take care of this issue soon before we want to apply for more OSMB grants.

•Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery Mater Planning: Fay said that the Hatchery Task Force is back together and working toward revisions to the master plan. There may be some regional economic investment money available for the main hatchery building.

Fay stated that the Parks Division was directed to prepare Service Information Sheets regarding general fund allocations. Snowden said the County faces a \$4.5 million short-fall in the discretionary general fund for next fiscal year. So department heads from the DA's office, the Sheriffs office, H&HS, PW, and Youth Services met this morning to identify \$4.5 million in cuts and service reductions. Since the Car Rental Tax and any money Parks receives from the Transient Room Tax doesn't fall under the discretionary general fund category it shouldn't be in the mix. But the DA's office and the Sheriff's office were not very happy with the level of cuts

they will have to take. Although the direction from County Admin. right now is to find this \$4.5 million from the discretionary general fund, the other Dept. Directors weren't willing to do that without putting some of the non-discretionary funds, which can be reallocated by an ordinance change, in the mix. Fay will work on just what losing the Car Rental Tax would mean to the Parks Division, which is about half our budget.

V. In the Matter of Amending the Lane Manual Chapter 18 to Revise Fees, Reservation Policies, and Special Use Permits to Increase Revenue

Fay stated that the Board wanted another proposal brought to a future Board meeting to include three requests: 1) Prepare an estimate of projected revenue without fees at Mt. Pisgah and offset the reduction by re-evaluating the fees from citation enforcement, increasing resident camping, camping and picnic reservation fees; 2) Evaluate the cost of providing a 50% discount on vehicle admission fees for Golden Age pass holders; and, 3) Evaluate an earn-a-pass program to enable volunteers who work on Lane County Park's projects to qualify for a season pass. Fay went over each of these as they are outlined in the Board Order that everyone received. Discussion followed which included what kind of value do we get for the volunteer work at Mt. Pisgah and the suggestion of separating the controversial issue of establishing admission fees at Mt. Pisgah from the issue of raising fees that are already established in other parks. Fay referred back to page 3 and 4 of the Board Order and briefly reviewed Options A through E and the possible increase in revenue under each option.

Risley asked whether the revenue from citation enforcement included the costs for enforcement and Winter said this was the revenue after costs had been deducted. Risley also wanted to add that you have to consider the large amount of staff time required for any type of volunteer program established. Dick Lamster added a comment regarding the Golden Age Pass – his experience when working for the Corps of Engineers was that 30-50% of users were using this pass which represented a significant loss in revenues. Further discussion followed regarding times to collect fees into the parks, establishing consistent times throughout the parks system, leaving the collection start times during the week at 11:00 a.m. to allow for those person who can't afford the admission fee to get in free at low use times.

It was the consensus of this Committee to stay with their earlier decision to endorse Option B.

VI. Frank Parrish Bridge Replacement

Fay said that there was a project to replace the single lane wooden bridge that crosses the Coast Fork of the Willamette River at the entrance to the Howard Buford Recreation Area. Ollie Snowden explained that the Board added this project to the Capital Improvement Program back in 1997 after Bob Keefer, former Lane County Parks Manager, came to the Engineering Division and asked that they replace the old bridge for a variety of traffic flow issues. If the bridge is not replaced there are extensive repairs needed. The new bridge will consist of two 11' lanes, and two 6' shoulders to allow for fishing off the bridge, and pedestrian and equestrian traffic. It took two years to get the environmental permits from the Corps of Engineers and the Division of State Lands, and Public Works will be opening bids on Friday, March 14. Snowden asked if this Committee wanted to weigh in and offer an opinion to the Board. Fay said that he felt it was a safety issue, especially if we needed to get emergency equipment in and people out of the park at the same time.

Motion: Medlin moved that this Committee support the action taken by staff to replace the Frank Parrish bridge. Schue seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

VII. Park Manager's Report

●**Oregon State Marine Board/ODFW Grant Opportunities – Jake Risley:** Jake added to his earlier comments that ODFW grant monies can be matched by OSMB grants monies therefore projects would be at no cost to Parks, except for staff time. Jake stated that there are four projects that he will be submitting, first to ODFW for 75% of the cost, then if approved, to OSMB for the other 25%. 1) Replace the deteriorating restroom at Hendricks Bridge with an accessible one and replace the old asphalt boat landing with a new concrete one. 2) Replace the deteriorating boat ramp at Perkins Peninsula as well as replace the old transient dock with an accessible one. 3) Add a transient dock at Richardson Park in the day use area to relieve congestion at the marina and allow boaters a place to dock their boats while using the shelter and day use area. 4) Put in a vault toilet at Munsel Lake to replace the portable one and put in an information kiosk to allow for adequate signing at this site.

●**Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery Mater Planning:** Fay added to his earlier comments that the task force consists of representatives from the McKenzie Watershed, Chamber of Commerce, US Forest Service, EWEB, LCOG, BLM, Blue River Schools and ODOT. They have looked at three different scenarios for using the Hatchery site – as an Interpretive Center, a Convention Opportunity or a Fly-Fishing School. The Task Force favors a Fly Fishing School, but still preserving the historical nature of the site. They will be preparing for a public meeting and will keep this Committee updated.

●**Citation Fees/Revenue – Todd Winter:** Winter said that he finally got it set up with Justice Court and County Finance so that citation revenues that exceed unitary assessments and court costs will now be deposited into a Park's account. These revenues will offset the cost of enforcing the park rules. Medlin had concerns regarding using this as a revenue generating program and Winter assured him that it has always been our policy to promote voluntary compliance. We just want to create a safe environment for families to come and recreate as well as protect our resources.

●**Blue Mountain Forest Practices Update:** Fay said that there are three options for controlling the vegetation around the newly planted trees at Blue Mt. where we have cut timber. Manual extraction, a combination of manual and mechanical extraction, and chemical extraction. It would cost more than \$165,000 to do manual and/or mechanical extraction with five entries per year for five years. For a chemical application, it will only require two entries and would cost about \$19,000. If you look at the last two cuts, our timber receipts were about \$100,000. Also, the cost of extraction has not been factored into the current budget. This issue will go to the Board for consideration sometime in the future.

●**Park Tour:** The Committee decided that they would like to tour Baker Bay Park and surrounding area parks as well as Blue Mountain. The tour is scheduled for Saturday, June 14, 2003, to begin at Armitage Park at 8:30 a.m.

●**Summer Meeting Times:** Rosselli requested that for the next two meetings, the start time be moved to 6:30 p.m. So for the meetings in April and May, we will start at 6:30 p.m. Dinner will be on your own.

●**Budget Approval:** Emily Schue thought we should go back and make a motion to approve the updates to the budget.

Motion: Davis moved that this Committee support the proposed budget as identified by Rich Fay. Schue seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

VII. Good of the Order

Rosselli asked for an update on the situation at Hileman Park. Fay said things have been pretty quite there recently. Rosselli asked if we had a booth at the recent RV Show at the fairgrounds. Fay stated that we did have a booth, which was manned by staff and the campground caretakers.

VIII. Adjournment:

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary